

Old Fort



361 DUSTY, WINDY LANES BORDERED WITH ROWS OF squat wooden houses, wide paved streets lined on each side with paintless one-story frame structures, the smells of river, fishboats, fertilizer plants and escaping gases, and overshadowing all, the gigantic gas reservoirs. That is the impression given by the Negro section of the Old Fort, located in the extreme northeastern section of Savannah.

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754 Here life goes on serenely for days, months. Then suddenly, as it happened only a short time ago on a calm Sunday morning, a woman is stabbed in the back and left writhing on the pavement to die before a swiftly gathering crowd. It was whispered among the frightened spectators that the death was caused by conjure, for despite all efforts to remove the knife it remained firmly embedded in the victim's back.

• 363 The streets present a monotonous aspect because of the
361 absence of grass and trees. Yet the pedestrian is frequently surprised to come upon a dead-end alley blocked by an old brick tenement house with lovely arched windows or to find gay flowers in boxes and tin cans on some of the low stoops. On several corners the houses abruptly give way to small grocery stores or beer parlors.

368 There are two Baptist churches and one Sanctified church
71 in the Negro part of the Old Fort. Although the people are devout believers in all the tenets of the Christian faith, many of them, particularly the old ones, are bound by older beliefs and superstitions. There exists among them a deep-

361 WITHIN THE WESTERN LIMITS OF SAVANNAH ARE
133 Frogtown and Currytown, through which flows Musgrove
342 Creek, narrow and sluggish, on its way from "Big Ogeechee"
363 to the red Savannah River. These are two poor communi-
351 ties, as can be seen from the paintless little houses on dirt
streets that often lack sidewalks. With the canal cutting
the center of the district, there is scant space for gardens;
but in spite of this, there are small patches of earth green
with collards and turnips, and almost every "stoop" is deco-
rated with a row of plants in tins of assorted dimensions.

889 During week days, with many persons away at work in other sections of the city, it is mostly the old who are found at home. Grandmothers and grandfathers "mind" the small children while the mothers work out.

115 One old woman, Anna Miller,* had lived most of her youth on a Butler Island plantation, where some of the older workers had occupied the same cabins given to them before emancipation.

"Sebral uh dem hans wuz bery ole people," said Anna Miller. "Dey speak a funny language an none uh duh res uh us couldn hahdly unuhstan a wud dey say. Dey hab special name fuh all kine uh ting, but duh only ting I kin membuh is dat dey call a watuh bucket a 'juba halthuh'."

We found here, too, that in certain households certain foods are considered to bring bad luck.

"I dohn eat peanuts," Millie McKen ** told us, "an I dohn let a soul in muh fambly eat em."

* Anna Miller, 1018 Cuyler Street, Currytown.

** Millie McKen, 400 West Duffy Street, Currytown.

Pin Point



- 361 PIN POINT, A NEGRO COMMUNITY ABOUT NINE MILES southeast of Savannah, is scattered over some twenty or thirty acres on a peninsula overlooking Shipyard Creek.
- 342 Many of the small wooden cabins are neatly whitewashed and are half hidden by shrubbery and spreading oaks.
- 351 Flowers and vegetables are planted in the most advantageous sunny spots near the houses and most of the yards are enclosed by picket fences, giving a cozy and pleasant privacy. The lanes, little more than wagon tracks, twist in and out and across the settlement. The informal and haphazard scattering of the houses, with high shrubbery bordering the lanes, gives an effect that is pleasing and unusual.
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368 Pin Point has a church, a pavilion on the tidewater creek, and a crab cannery. The men and women who do not work as domestic servants at the nearby country places find employment in the crab cannery or fish and crab and shrimp for themselves. The life is quiet, soothed by the smell of the salt marsh.

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621 It is only when some great excitement takes place, a stirring religious service, a dance at the community pavilion, a death,^{37b} or some scandal concerning a neighbor, that quiet Pin Point bestirs itself. Recently, one of the fishermen ventured into the foreign waters of the Ogeechee about ten miles distant and there he was almost devoured by an alligator. All that was left of him, "the ham," was given a burial² amid the loud lamentations of his relatives and neighbors.

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181 The people are, almost without exception, black or dark

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3: Creel H-4 (no date) 1988
NN23 Sea Islanders NN23
South Carolina



The Plantation "street." (Personal Collection.)

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